

**We fight for**

**LIFE**

**R. Palme Dutt**

TWOPENCE

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## Communist Policy Series

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# WE FIGHT FOR LIFE

by R. Palme Dutt

What must we do?

Everyone can see the hideous, filthy, bloodstained mess into which the conditions of life of the majority of mankind are falling with the present war.

As the war extends, the thought must strike at the hearts of all : How has the life of civilised human beings come to this sorry pass? What kind of civilisation is this? When all the conditions have been won by the science and labour of generations for abundance and happiness for all, why can the rulers of the most advanced "civilised" capitalist States offer to the people nothing but unlimited barbarism, destruction, economic chaos, spreading famine and disease, terror and slaughter?

More and more are coming to see that only the action of the working people can end this state of affairs.

The blows of the war shatter stability, lay bare the festering sores of our social system of inequality—the gulf between the rich and the poor, the rulers and the ruled.

But the blows of the war have also begun to awaken people to the need of change; to the need of a real democracy; to the need of changing our whole mode of life, of production, of Government; to the need of urgently finding the path to a peace which will be a real peace.

This is no time for pessimism. This is no time for impotent



pacifist lamentations, or for passive acceptance of this shipwreck of human society. We must act, if mankind is not to be destroyed.

The Communist Party, the party of the future free and equal society which must and will arise from the present chaos, addresses now its most earnest appeal to all plain men and women who live by work, whose interests are not represented by the present Government and ruling class. It addresses its appeal to all workers and to all thinking men and women to face soberly, without illusions, without sentiment, the present problems of the British people and their responsibilities.

## HOW LONG ?

On all sides the questions are asked: How long must we suffer? Where will the war lead? Where will it end? What can we do to end it?

To these questions it is necessary to answer with merciless frankness.

It will go on so long as we tolerate it.

It can go on for years and for years, if we allow it. The last war went on for four and a-quarter years; and it was only ended by the revolt of the people, first in Russia, and then in Germany, while all the statesmen and general staffs had their plans ready for the grand campaign of 1919.

Churchill speaks of the campaigns of 1941 and 1942. Hitler speaks of five years of war. The American millionaires are still preparing the most gigantic rearmament to plunge in when the other combatants are exhausted.

Listen to these estimates of leading experts for the prospect already of this coming winter:

*"Starvation is bound to sweep the Old World this winter. Undernourished millions will fall an easy prey to disease and lack of sanitation. Disease knows no boundary lines."*

(Norman Davis, Chairman of the American Red Cross, June, 1940.)



*"Tens of millions of people on the Continent of Europe will soon face the danger of starvation. Many millions may well perish."*

(R. S. Hudson, Minister of Agriculture, House of Commons, July 12, 1940.)

*"Some ten to fifteen millions may die or be permanently injured by famine and disease."*

(Ex-President Hoover, October, 1940.)

This war is a crime of the dying, bankrupt capitalist order. Years ago, after the last war, after the robber Treaty of Versailles, the Communists all over the world gave warning that this peace of capitalism was no peace, but would give rise to new world war. The Communists gave warning that, if the workers of Britain, France and Germany did not advance to end the power of the capitalist class and establish Socialism, as the Russian workers had done, the result would be a second world war.

Had the leadership of the Communist Party been followed twenty years ago, there would be no war to-day, but a happy Socialist Europe advancing along the paths of peaceful construction.

But the leaders of capitalism and their supporters, the Labour and Social-Democratic leaders falsely proclaimed that the Socialist Revolution would lead only to bloodshed and chaos, and that their path, the path of co-operation of the workers with capitalism, would lead to peaceful progress and better times. The outcome is the present war.

This war did not begin from the events of 1939. It did not begin from the coming of Hitler to power.

This war is a continuation of the war of 1914-18, as Churchill himself has said. It continues the war of Anglo-American imperialism and German imperialism. There are the same false slogans of "liberty" and "justice" and the "rights of small nations." There are the same aims of the



imperialists to win the spoils of world domination, to maintain and extend their power, to save capitalism.

If we let the imperialist rulers drag on the war, where will it lead? Whichever side wins, if the imperialists remain in power, it can only lead, after years of destruction and slaughter, not to a victory of the people, but to a peace imposed on the peoples by the imperialists: a peace of enslavement and spoliation and oppression of nations, like the Treaty of Versailles (an imperialist ruling class can make no other kind of peace—all legends and golden promises to the contrary are deception, as the last war showed), sowing the seeds for new war. And so to renewed economic crisis, mass unemployment (seven millions, according to the prophecy of Greenwood), heavier armament, heavier reaction and slavery leading to the third world war.

NO!

“Never again.” Remember how the millions in all countries came out of the last war with that slogan. Even the leaders of the Labour movement, who had plunged deep in the blood of the last war and have plunged again in this war, repeated it in those years after the war.

**But the time to put “Never again!” into practice is when war is here, not after it is over.**

## · WAR—FOR WHAT ?

For over a year the people have followed their rulers down the abyss.

In spite of generations of socialist teaching, in spite of three-quarters of a century of the organised Labour movement, in spite of the experience of the last world war and of the Socialist Soviet Union, the millions of workers of Britain and Germany are spending their sweat and their lives to destroy, maim, starve and kill one another for the profit of their capitalist masters. And the workers of America are being drawn into the whirlpool.



For what are the millions asked to sacrifice and die?

The people are told that the war is for liberty and democracy, for the defeat of fascism, for the rights of nations, for a new and better world.

But what are the facts?

Two world blocks of robber Powers are fighting one another in this war for world domination.

On the one side are the British Empire and the United States. These are the two wealthiest capitalist Powers. They control, directly or indirectly, one-half of the earth's territory and one-third of its population. They command the seas and dominate the most important world routes and markets. They hold the main sources of raw materials, oil, rubber, tin, copper, etc.; in their hands are huge economic resources and almost all the world's gold stocks. Their capital investments in all regions chain the world to the financial magnates of the City and Wall Street.

The British Empire is the oldest and largest capitalist Empire, having been built up through centuries of aggression; it covers one-quarter of the earth and subjects one-quarter of the world's population to the British ruling class. In the last war for "democracy" the British imperialists added two million more square miles to the Empire. But now they have increasing difficulty in maintaining their Empire as rival capitalist Powers advance to share the booty. In the present crisis they become increasingly dependent on the United States for support, while they fight to maintain and extend their world domination.

The United States is not yet directly fighting in the war, but has, in fact, already taken sides. The American millionaires supply Britain with war materials, and in return exact cash, securities, surrender of markets and cession of naval and air bases. In this way they foment the war, amass enormous profits out of it, and weaken both their British and German rivals. At the same time they prepare feverishly for



future military participation in order to emerge as the final victors, inherit the British Empire and establish their world domination.

The British and American rulers cover up their aims of world exploitation and empire with slogans about "liberty" and "democracy"—by which they mean the rule of the Anglo-American millionaires.

On the other side are Germany, Italy and Japan. These equally piratical Powers came late to the colonial scramble; their possessions are much less than those of Britain and the United States; they found the main territories of the world already taken. Therefore, they challenge the existing division of the world and seek to change it by force of arms. The challenge of German imperialism, which is the most highly organised and technically advanced system of monopoly capital, was defeated in the last war, but is resumed in the present war on a greater scale. They have already conquered and enslaved a number of nations, although considerably less than the numbers enslaved by the British Empire.

These three Powers cover up their predatory aims of world domination with slogans of the demand for "living room," "justice" and a "new world order"—by which they mean the redivision and spoliation of the world in the interests of German, Italian and Japanese monopoly capital.

All three of these Powers have organised their entire economic, social and political structure on a fascist-militarist basis for purposes of war. The other so-called "democratic" Powers are developing increasingly towards a similar basis.

Thus, this war is a war of one set of exploiters against another set of exploiters. It is a war of rival capitalist Great Powers, like the last war: a war for world domination: for the largest share in the exploitation of the world; for possessions, profits, markets and spheres of influence; for the new division of the world.

The interests of the working people in all countries are



wholly opposed to this conflict of imperialist Powers for world domination, in which the people are sacrificed for the profit of the exploiters.

## MUST MILLIONS DIE TO SAVE CAPITALISM ?

The victory of imperialism, whether of one or the other camp, in this war—either of the German-Italian-Japanese combination or of the Anglo-American combination—would mean the victory of capitalism over the aspirations of the people.

It would mean limitless economic burdens upon the people, staggering debts, lowered standards and renewed economic crisis. It would mean a new world war after this one.

The real issue before the people in this war is not the choice between the victory of one or other imperialism, of the German-Italian-Japanese combination or the Anglo-American combination.

The real issue before the people in this war is whether they shall sacrifice themselves for the victory of either imperialism—whether millions must die to save capitalism, to strengthen their own enslavement.

The British ruling class are not fighting to liberate the people of Europe from fascism and reaction. They have always been, for a century and a-half, the main stranglers of every popular revolution in every country.

The war aims of Churchill, for which the British workers are asked to die, are the war aims of British imperialism; to protect and maintain the domination of the British Empire over a-quarter of the world; to smash the rival German imperialism and inflict a new super-Versailles; to maintain the reactionary interests of capitalist class rule against the world Socialist Revolution.

There is nothing they fear more than a real popular revolution in Europe, which they know would lead to the victory of Socialism.



Therefore, their aim in Germany is not the victory of democracy, but what Duff Cooper, Minister of Information, has called a "Revolution of the Right"—that is, a dictatorship of the generals and industrialists obedient to the dictates of British policy and ready to join an anti-Soviet front.

Therefore, also, they have ready a whole series of reactionary puppet "Governments" in London for the countries of Europe—the super-fascist De Gaulle for France; the vicious anti-Soviet General Sikorski for Poland; the discredited associate of Chamberlain and Daladier, Benes, together with associates of Hitler for Czechoslovakia; and so forth.

They are preparing to strangle the Socialist Revolution in Europe with the aim finally to organise the war front against the Soviet Union (remember Finland). Wendell Willkie, Republican candidate for the Presidency of the United States, has declared that it is necessary to support a victory of British imperialism in order to defeat the menace of a Socialist Revolution in Europe.

Do the British workers wish to sacrifice themselves for these aims?

Must they not rather feel with Lenin, when they are called on to die for such aims:

**"If perish we must, let us perish in the struggle for our own cause, for the cause of the workers, for the socialist revolution, and not for the interests of the capitalists and landowners."**

## THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM

Not victory of German-Italian-Japanese imperialism, nor victory of Anglo-American imperialism, but victory of the working people in all countries over their imperialist masters must be the aim and hope of the working people.

The only possible and practical path for the workers is the struggle for power, for real democracy, in order to overthrow capitalism, the private ownership of the means of production, and construct Socialism. This path leads to real freedom of the people and to lasting peace.



The issue which dominates the world to-day, ever since the victory of the first Socialist Revolution in 1917, is the issue of Socialism and imperialism.

Those who see the main world division to-day as the division between fascist and non-fascist imperialist Powers (the borders between which grow daily less) are deluding themselves and deluding others. There are two main camps in the world to-day. On the one side the camp of the rising world of Socialism; of the Soviet Union, of the working people in all the imperialist countries, of the colonial peoples. On the other side, the camp of the imperialist exploiters, of finance-capital, of the rulers of the warring imperialist Powers and their hangers-on. The first camp represent all the advancing forces of the future which will finally conquer the present chaos and misery.

The way forward was shown in the last war, when the Russian workers and peasants, under the leadership of the Communist Party, after three years of war, drove out their capitalists and landlords, set up their own Government, drew their country out of the war, made peace and proceeded to build Socialism. To-day the triumph of Socialism in the Soviet Union is the inspiration and hope of the working people in all countries. The Soviet Union is the fortress of Socialism in the midst of warring imperialism, strong and ready to withstand any attack of imperialism from either side, and exercising its powerful influence in the interests of peace.

Only Socialism can finally end imperialist wars by ending their cause—the class system of society. The victory of Socialism in the leading countries of the world means the end of war, because it ends the jungle-fight of the exploiters over the spoils; it ends the fight for profits, spheres of influence, colonies, markets and monopolist domination. Socialism means the freedom and brotherhood of all nations without distinction of race or colour. Socialism means that all peoples freely organise their production for use, for common advantage.



## THE COMMUNIST PARTY FIGHTS FOR LIFE, FREEDOM, PEACE AND HAPPINESS OF THE PEOPLE

The Communist Party, the party of the working people, is now fighting against all the streams of jingoism and reaction for the life, liberties and future of the people of this country and of all countries.

For twenty years the Communist Party has urged the working people and the Labour movement to cease to trust and to obey blindly the present ruling class which has only brought disasters on the people. The present ruling class, the financial and trust magnates who hold power in this and all the imperialist countries, is a completely degenerate ruling class, which is incapable of any constructive solution of the problems of humanity (the world economic crisis already showed this), and can only drive forward blindly, without compass, to increasing destruction, chaos and savagery, and drag humanity down with it.

The Communist Party has warned against those leaders of labour who have made common cause with this ruling class, with the monopolists, employers and landlords, and have sacrificed labour's independence.

It has urged the working people and, above all, the industrial workers, who represent the rising class, who hold the future of society in their hands, to unite; to struggle against the lowering of the workers' standards, against the foreign and home policy of their masters, against fascism, reaction and war; and to put an end to the rule of the monopolists, the bankers, landlords and employers—to put an end to capitalism.

Where the working people have followed the leadership of the Communist Party, there in the countries which to-day comprise the Soviet Union, two hundred millions of people have achieved Socialism, peace, security and limitless social



and cultural advance. New nations have joined them and found liberation and peace in Socialism. In the midst of the barbarism and war of the capitalist world they have been able to maintain peace by their strength, while they stand ready to defend Socialism against all attack.

The Communist Party fought to the last to prevent this war. The Communists strove to establish a great Peace Front of the peoples in unity with the Socialist Soviet Union, on the basis of international working-class unity, to check the advance of war and win time for the advance of Socialism.

This path also was blocked by the leaders of capitalism and of the Labour Party.

The leaders of British capitalism refused a Peace Pact with the Socialist Soviet Union. They preferred to support, finance and rearm German fascism (the path of so-called "appeasement," really of war provocation, the path of Munich) in the hope that its power would be turned against Socialism, against the Soviet Union. When this plan failed in the face of the strength of the Soviet Union, and the re-armed German imperialism threatened the Empire interests of the British rulers, the British imperialists preferred the path of war to the path of the Peace Front.

The leaders of the Labour Party and of the Second International shared the responsibility for this policy. They opposed international working-class unity. They supported Chamberlain's criminal arms blockade of Spanish Democracy. They applauded Munich. They opposed a People's Front which could have defeated Chamberlain and made possible the Peace Front. Thereby they share the responsibility for this war.

Now that the war is here, and the Tory and Labour leaders have joined in its support, the Communist Party carries forward the fight for peace and the interests of the people. The Communist Party calls to the working people to support its positive constructive programme for the way from the present crisis, to shorten the horrors of war for the people, and to lead to a lasting peace, to Socialism.



## FOR A PEOPLE'S PEACE

The Communist Party, born from the struggle of the working people against the last war, considers its foremost urgent task to assist the working people to secure a lasting peace.

Not an imperialist peace; not a peace based on conquest and subjection of other nations, which will again lead to new wars.

**But a People's Peace based on international solidarity of the working people—a peace with no annexations or conquests or national enslavement; a peace with no penal clauses or indemnities; a peace based on the freedom of all peoples to determine their own destiny.**

The people of this country and of all the countries in the war want peace. But they do not want a peace that means enslavement.

The British people want peace; but they do not want a peace that means the domination of Hitler in Britain.

The German people want peace; but they do not want a peace that means subjection to a new Versailles.

The whole propaganda of imperialism, of the Governments and the press, teaches the people on both sides to see as the main enemy the aggressive designs of the foreign imperialism, never of their own. Therefore, they remain, in fact, enslaved to imperialism and its wars. The mutual fears of the aggressive aims of the enemy imperialism cancel out the common desire of the overwhelming majority of the people in both countries for peace.

The imperialist gangsters take advantage of these fears of the people, of this natural desire for national independence, to trap the people into support of their war of spoliation. Under the pretence that the war is for national defence, for the defence of the independence of the nation, they send the



armies, the warships and planes to the furthest ends of the earth for the enslavement of other nations and for the battle against rival exploiters over the spoils and conquests of foreign domination.

It is not the desires of the peoples on both sides for peace with freedom that are incompatible. It is the robber policies and aims of their rulers that are incompatible and stand in the way of peace.

The people have no interest in the robber policy of their rulers, neither in Germany nor in Britain. The profits of Empire, the spoils and tribute, the dividends and pickings fill the pockets of the ruling class, the bondholders, the exploiters and their hangers-on. But the burdens, the taxation, the neglect of home needs, the ruinous wars, which are the price of Empire, fall on the people.

To expect the imperialist Governments to make a just, democratic peace would be the grossest deception.

A just, democratic peace demands that the freedom and independence of nations must apply equally to all nations conquered by either side; not only to the eighty millions enslaved by the armed power of German imperialism, but also to the four hundred and thirty millions enslaved by the armed power of British imperialism.

Those who demand the liberation only of the nations conquered by the other side are not demanding a just, democratic peace; they are, consciously or unconsciously, only serving the interests of their own imperialists who are pursuing jingo, annexationist war-making aims.

To win a People's Peace the peoples must get rid of their imperialist Governments and gain power in their own hands.

## FOR A PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT

The present "National" Government which rules in Britain is not a People's Government.

This Churchill Coalition Government, with its War



Cabinet of five Tories and three Labour Imperialists, does not represent the interests of the people. It represents the interests of the wealthy privileged class, of the big bankers, employers and landlords. It protects profits and property, not the people.

Democracy is trampled underfoot. Government Administration is conducted by emergency decree. Issues of the utmost importance for the people, involving the lives of millions, are determined in secret. The present parliament, which has exceeded its mandate and is not representative of the people, is reduced to a formal rôle. Municipal institutions are largely suspended. Supreme powers are placed in the hands of appointed Regional Commissioners and the police authorities. A Government censorship is established over the press. The rights of public meeting, of free speech and the press—the rights won by generations of struggle of the people in the teeth of the opposition of the ruling class—have been so severely restricted that what remains exists on sufferance within increasingly narrow limits. Normal political propaganda has been made the subject of prosecution under one or another of the network of regulations.

This Churchill-Beaverbrook-Bevin Government is a Government of the ruthless dictatorship of Monopoly Capital. The leaders of this War Coalition Government, the Churchills, Andersons, Lloyds, Amerys and Beaverbrooks, demonstrably on their record, are the deadliest enemies of the working class and Socialism. Churchill at the head of the Government; Anderson of "Black-and-Tan" fame by his side in Chamberlain's former position; Halifax for Foreign Affairs; Amery for India; Lloyd for the Colonies; Duff Cooper for Propaganda; Duncan, the Steel King, in charge of Supply—these names are a programme.

The presence of Labour Ministers in the Government does not mean that the workers are in power or even sharing power. The power of capital remains in control, not only in the Government; but through the entire machinery of State, through the whole economic and political life of the country.



The presence of Labour Ministers in the Government only means that the leaders of the Labour Party, Trades Union Congress and Co-operative Party are acting as spokesmen of the ruling capitalist class. Their rôle is in practice that of decoys to deceive the workers into thinking they have a share in the Government, and to camouflage what is really a Diehard Tory Government.

The Labour Ministers have been given the job, in the Ministries of Labour and Home Security, to curb the unrest of the people, to hold them down, while they are fleeced and exploited, robbed of their rights and sacrificed to the war machine. The Labour Ministers are the allies of the Tory machine and the war profiteers.

If the present bloodshed is to be ended, if the impoverishment and ruin of the people is to be stopped, the dictatorship of the monopoly capitalists and their Government must be ended.

The people must see through the lies of the press and the Government.

The people must demand real democracy—the rule of the people, with power in the hands of the representatives of the working people; of the workers in the factories, mines, docks, shops and offices; of the professional and intellectual workers; of the small traders, small business men and working farmers; of the housewives.

**The “National” Government must give place to a People’s Government of chosen representatives of the working people, with no representatives of imperialism or friends of fascism; a Government based for its support on the mass organisations of the working people; a Government pledged to a programme in the interests of the people, to defend the interests of the people against big capital and lead the way out of the war.**

Only such a People’s Government can defend the people against their enemies at home and abroad, and lead the way to a People’s Peace.



## TAKE OVER THE BANKS AND LARGE INDUSTRY

The power of such a People's Government can only be effectively exercised on behalf of the people if it takes immediate measures to curb the power of the handful of bankers and big industrialists who to-day control the State machine and economic and political life in their own interests, and who have hitherto made every Government of modern times in this country, including the Labour Governments, their docile servant.

The ruling financial oligarchy are robbing and ruining the people. Thousands of millions of pounds are being poured out for war; the rate has reached £9,000,000 a day. Where does the money go? The great part of it goes on fat war contracts, on which hundreds of millions of pounds are pocketed in profits and commissions by the monopolists. The production of munitions of war, with heavy overwork of the workers, ends in smoke; but the debt remains and has reached the fantastic size of over ten thousand million pounds, including the floating debt. Hundreds of millions of pounds go to the bondholders. Of the money that is paid out in wages, soldiers' pay, dependents' allowances or unemployment allowances and pensions, the great part of the ruthlessly restricted subsistence rates allowed is either taken back by the landlords as rent or skimmed by the big monopolies, manufacturers, trading combines and transport monopolies as profits on the necessities the workers have to buy.

All the "big" interests get their squeeze. The railway companies have secured a State guarantee to increase their profits £7,000,000 above pre-war, and even then raise fares higher and higher to make the final figure of profits (already guaranteed £40,000,000 minimum) still greater.

The economy of the country is reduced to chaos. Inflation has already begun and many experts consider that it will increase, plundering all small savings and fleecing all who



are dependent on wages or small fixed incomes. Prices rise and rise. New taxes are constantly added; taxes on the necessities of life, like the Purchase Tax; taxes on wages, now in operation. There is widespread unemployment. There is crisis in the coalmining and textile industries.

A Government representative of Big Business is neither capable nor willing to deal with this situation in the interests of the people. The pretence of "control" is a swindle. The Big Business representatives are themselves the "controllers."

"None shall make profit out of the war" solemnly declared the Chairman of the Trades Union Congress at its annual session in October, 1940. But the profits are being made, and if the General Council of the Trades Union Congress do not know it, they are alone in their innocence. "Excess Profits Tax will be raised to 100 per cent" acclaimed the *Daily Herald* on March 23, 1940; "this means that in general no profits will be made out of the war by anybody." In the very next week, in the week ending June 1, 1940, 52 companies published reports showing profits of £7,191,000 compared with £5,242,000 for the previous year—an increase of 37 per cent, and even 44 per cent (Handley Page) of the big firms—apart from concealed profits and reserves. By August the same *Daily Herald* was complaining that the 100 per cent E.P.T. was a "fraud."

*"The idea that 100 per cent E.P.T. is limiting dividends is complete nonsense. In this sense 100 per cent E.P.T. is a fraud."* (*Daily Herald*, August 12, 1940.)

Only a People's Government with the backing of the mass organisations of the workers, can deal with the scandal of war profiteering and tackle the disastrous economic situation in the interests of the people.

What must be done is plain. In place of empty lying phrases about the "conscription of wealth" (which the Government declares has already taken place) and "equality of sacrifice," it is necessary to begin with the first elementary measures towards the real conscription of wealth.



**Take over the banks, the Bank of England, the "Big Five," and the City financial and insurance houses, and amalgamate them into a single State Bank under the control of the People's Government.**

**Confiscate all the land of the big landed estates as the first step towards the State reorganisation of agriculture.**

**Cancel the State Debt in respect of all the large bondholders, making special provision for small savings.**

**Nationalise the mines, railways and transport, iron, steel, engineering and aircraft industries, and electricity and public utilities undertakings (with compensation for small stockholders) and run them under the State in conjunction with the workers' organisations.**

On this initial basis the People's Government would be in a position to take rapid emergency measures to organise economic life in the interests of the people, raise the standards of the people, extend social services, and prepare the way for the advance to Socialism, which can alone finally solve the economic problems confronting the British people.

## **FREE INDIA AND THE COLONIAL PEOPLES**

A People's Government can only effectively break with imperialism if it takes immediate steps to free India and the colonial peoples.

Of the five hundred millions in the British Empire, over four hundred and thirty millions are autocratically ruled under a colonial regime and denied elementary democratic rights.

All the "Empire-consciousness" propaganda of the Government about "a family of free nations" is deliberate deception to hide the truth. The White population of the self-governing Dominions, to whom this description is intended to refer, total one-twenty-fifth of the population of the Empire. The Empire is a prison-house of nations. The domination of the Empire, its spoils and exploitation, is the basic issue of the war.



The Indian National Congress, the accredited spokesman of the Indian national movement, which in the last elections won a far more overwhelming majority and mandate than the "National" Government could win in Britain, has repudiated the right of the British imperialists to drag the three hundred and seventy millions of India into war against the will of the people and demands complete independence. The British rulers reply by throwing thousands of Indian fighters for freedom into prison.

Similar repressive measures have been adopted in all the colonial countries.

"A people which oppresses others can never itself be free." This statement of Marx is profoundly true for the British people.

The allies of the British people in their struggle against the imperialists are the hundreds of millions of India and of the colonial countries.

**Let India have complete independence.**

**End the enforced partition of Ireland and recognise the independence of the united Irish Republic.**

**Give all the colonial peoples the full rights of self-determination.**

The freeing of India and the colonial peoples will mean the liberation of a mighty common front of the peoples, hundreds of millions strong, to go forward in unity with the Chinese people, and with the Socialist Soviet Union, to the aim of a People's Peace and the ending of the world domination of imperialism and reaction.

## BRING PEACE TO THE PEOPLE

A People's Peace cannot be won by the people of one country alone, but only by the united effort of the people in the leading countries involved in the war.

But the victory of the working people in a single country, Britain, can in the present international situation play the



decisive role in stimulating the action of the working people in the other countries in the war and thus lead the way to the rapid winning of a People's Peace.

**If a People's Government came to power in this country, it should immediately make its proposals for peace to all Governments and to all peoples. It should publicly proclaim to the peoples its proposals for peace on the basis of no annexations and no indemnities, of self-determination for all peoples.**

Such a Peace Programme of a People's Government in Britain, with its earnestness proved by the freeing of India and the colonial peoples, would rally the peoples of the world and exercise an influence comparable to that of the Peace Programme of the Russian Workers' Government in 1917.

So long as Churchill rules in Britain, so long as a British ruling class maintains and fights for the domination of subject nations; so long as they threaten Europe with a new Versailles and with the imposition of puppet counter-revolutionary Governments: for so long the revolutionary struggle in Europe is held back. Hitler is able to rally support in Germany against the menace of Churchill and a new Versailles. The nations enslaved by the Axis hesitate to strike out for their freedom, if the only prospect is to fall under the domination of British imperialism.

But as soon as the British people throw off their own imperialists and hold out an offer of a People's Peace, the situation is reversed. The influence of the People's Government in Britain and of the Socialist Soviet Union would become the decisive rallying influences of the people's struggle in Europe. The position and power of reaction in Europe would be undermined.

Even in the most unfavourable situation, even in the event of the delay for a short while of the maturing of the revolution in Europe, the German and Italian imperialists would be



faced with a situation of such internal difficulty as would compel them to manoeuvre with the utmost care and caution in approaching the question of peace negotiations.

**Pending the reaching of peace, the People's Government in Britain would take all the necessary measures for the defence of the power of the people against all enemies at home and abroad.**

For such a real defence a People's Government would be enormously more powerful than any previous imperialist Government conducting war for imperialist aims; since it would be free of waste and disorganisation of the profiteers and parasites; it would be able to tap the limitless revolutionary energy and creative initiative of the working people fighting in their own cause; and it would have for allies the popular forces in all countries.

For we are not alone in the struggle. Our struggle for peace, for the ending of imperialist domination and war, and for the victory of Socialism, is international. What we are fighting for here, the working people of Germany, of Italy, of France are fighting for in their country. The interests of the workers against the exploiters in all countries are united.

In defiance of the terror the German working class has raised its voice through the German Communist Party:

“The German working class is filled with a sense of solidarity with the working class of Britain which is waging a struggle—daily growing in strength—against its own capitalist class for a People's Peace and for the liberation of all oppressed peoples.

“Only the German big capitalists and their lackeys, who enrich themselves by war and the conquest of other countries, whose greed and lust for power are insatiable, want the war to continue. The German people want peace, want to co-operate with all peoples.

“The German working class stands for an immediate end to the war, an end to the slaughter and an end to the blood-



shed, an end to the horrors of destruction, to the terrible sufferings of the millions of toilers . . . for a peace without annexations and indemnities, without the oppression of other nations."

This is the voice of the working people in all countries. Not in shameful unity with our own imperialists in support of war, but in unity with the working people of all countries we shall go forward to the victory of a People's Peace and Socialism.

## HOW TO WIN POWER IN THE HANDS OF THE PEOPLE

Many people agree with the aim of a People's Government and a People's Peace; but they do not see how the people can make their will felt or how to remove the "National" Government. They ask: Even if the majority of the people should want a People's Government, how can they hope to reach it, when no elections are held in war-time and this out-of-date Parliament is packed with "yes-men" supporters of this Coalition Government?

There is only one answer to this question. Only the united and determined mass movement of the people can make their will felt and achieve their aims. Not routine forms, but the strength of the mass movement will determine this question. Every gain that has been won and extorted by the people from the hostile ruling class has been won by the mass struggle of the people. The early reform of Parliament was enforced by the mass struggle of the people outside Parliament. The freedom of the press was won by the courageous action of the people. The rights of the trade unions were won by the solidarity, heroism and sacrifices of the workers. In more recent times will be remembered the victory of the "Hands Off Russia" campaign in 1920, which stopped the war on Russia; "Red Friday" in 1925; the heroic record of the sailors at Invergordon; and the mass struggles against the unemployment pay cuts.



The issues at stake to-day are enormously greater; the existence and future of the working-class movement and of the people of this country are at stake. But the strength of the working people is also enormously greater, with the working class at their head, once they have achieved unity in the struggle for their needs and interests.

War conditions awaken millions who were before politically inactive. War conditions compel rapid political changes.

The Chamberlain Government fell in face of the blaze of popular anger in the summer of this year, in spite of the fact that it retained to the last its parliamentary majority. As the Chamberlain Government was rapidly discredited, so also this Coalition Government will become discredited in the eyes of the people by its record and by the experience of the war. More and more people will come to recognise that the only solution is a People's Government.

The people must fight against every measure that is directed against them and that strengthens the reactionaries, the profiteers, the capitalist class and their Government. They must fight for every measure that furthers their interests and strengthens their fighting capacity.

We must unite in the fight for all the urgent needs of every section of the people in the present crisis; for real air raid protection and the needs of the victims of air raids; for higher standards and the restoration of social services; for democratic rights; for the demands of the workers in industry; for the needs of the men in the forces and their dependants.

We must fight for :—

**Immediate increase of wages, unemployment scales and pensions to meet the rise in the cost of living; Soldier's pay, 5s. a day (2s. allotment for dependants); and £2 a week basic rate for the soldier's dependant, with 8s. 6d. for each child;**

**Withdrawal of the Purchase Tax; no taxation of wages; limitation of food prices;**

**Real Air Raid Precautions; immediate construction of Haldane Shelters; homes for the homeless; full**



**immediate compensation for all victims of air raids; taking over of luxury flats and mansions; Emergency employment schemes to absorb the unemployed at trade union rates of pay on works of social benefit and production of the necessities of life.**

## FIGHT NAZISM AT HOME

At the same time we must fight the spreading Nazism at home and for the democratic rights of the people. There is no sharper exposure of this "war for democracy" than the steadily expanding destruction of democratic rights which is accompanying it. In France this destruction was carried to the fullest extreme and ended in the victory of fascism. In this country the process is still developing; but the danger is already grave and urgent.

Speakers have been arrested, meetings prohibited or dissolved, and leaflets confiscated. Anti-fascist refugees have been rounded up in concentration camps. There have been internments of Socialists and trade unionists without charge or trial. The right to strike is abolished. Victimisation is extending in the factories; and the drive against militants is assisted by the central Labour and trade union machine. While these measures are exercised against Left-wing workers and democrats, the highly-placed friends of fascism are left free.

The battle between democracy and fascism in this country is still developing. The monopoly capitalist rulers who have always exercised their real dictatorship behind the façade of parliamentary democracy are now seeking to utilise the war crisis in order to smash the democratic rights of the people and advance to a fascist State. Only the most active resistance of the people, of all the working class and democratic forces can defeat this offensive.

The fight for democratic rights is inseparably united with the fight for a People's Government. The freest functioning of every form and avenue of popular expression is the indispensable basis for a real Government of the people, responsible



to the feelings of the people and reflecting their wishes in its programme and action.

The people must fight for :—

**Withdrawal of all anti-democratic measures and regulations.**

**Widest extension of democratic rights, freedom of speech, press and organisation, together with extension of material facilities (use of halls, the B.B.C., etc., by workers' organisations) to make these rights effective.**

**Stringent measures against all "Fifth Column" Nazi and Fascist sympathisers and supporters in high places and reactionary enemies of democracy; prohibition of propaganda inciting to racial hatred.**

**Democracy in the armed forces; full democratic rights for all men in the armed forces; replacement of the existing class basis by a popular democratic basis of organisation of a People's Army under a People's Government.**

This fight for the urgent immediate needs and rights of the people must be carried through, if we are to prevent the destruction of the working-class movement and democracy and the reduction of the people to slave conditions and starvation standards.

Only such determined struggle of the working people for their interests and rights can build up their unity and solidarity, give them confidence in their strength and weld them into a mighty united army against the exploiters and parasites, capable of going forward with the advance of the struggle and of political awakening, to the fight for the defeat of the Government and the establishment of a People's Government.

## THE PEOPLE'S CONVENTION

In all parts of the country the movement of the people is developing in many initial forms, in demonstrations and



conferences, in mass petitions and delegations, in rent strikes, in lightning strikes in the factories, in all kinds of partial action.

In many parts of the country the people have won initial victories. The London workers, in their fight for protection against air raids, in their initiative for action over-riding Government bans and sacred property rights, have set an example which has inspired enthusiasm all over the country. In many factories the workers have been able to enforce concessions, to win increases, to uphold rights under attack, or to defeat attempts at victimisation. The temper of the people has more than once been able to enforce retreats on the Government over limited issues, as in some of the attacks on democratic rights.

All this is the prelude to greater struggles.

In order to draw together the many streams of popular movement and agitation into a united common movement and forge a common programme, several hundreds of the most active and influential representatives of the people, of working-class and democratic organisations in all parts of the country, have united to call a great People's Convention of delegates of the people elected on the widest democratic basis, to be held on January 12, 1941.

The aim of the People's Convention is expressed in the Six Points on the basis of which it is called :

- (1) Defence of the people's living standards.
- (2) Defence of the people's democratic and trade union rights.
- (3) Adequate air raid precautions, deep bomb-proof shelters, rehousing and relief of victims.
- (4) Friendship with the Soviet Union.
- (5) A People's Government, truly representative of the whole people, and able to inspire the confidence of the working people of the world.
- (6) A People's Peace that gets rid of the causes of war.

Already District Conventions have been held in Scotland,



South Wales and other parts of the country in preparation for the People's Convention.

**The People's Convention offers a great opportunity for the uniting of all sections of the people in the common fight for a People's Government and a People's Peace.**

The need now is to elect delegates to the People's Convention from all working-class and democratic organisations; from workers' and shop stewards' councils in the factories; from women's and youth organisations; from professional and intellectual workers and students; from small traders and farmers; from sports and cultural movements; from every type of association of the people; as well as from mass meetings and conferences of the working people in all parts of the country.

The People's Convention must be made a great success, a real expression of the will of the people, and a real challenge of the people to the ruling class and their Government.

## THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ORGANISED WORKERS

The millions of organised workers, the millions of workers in the great war industries, in the mines, in the docks and on the railways, hold the power of decision in their hands. On their action depends the future of the country. They are the natural leaders of all sections of the people against the tyranny of monopoly capital. They have the traditions, the organisation and the experience of the struggle to rally and unite the movement of the people.

In every factory and plant the common fighting front of the workers needs to be built up. The extension and strengthening of the shop stewards' councils is of decisive importance.

In every locality the common fighting front of the workers needs to be built up. The Trades Councils can play a great rôle in this. A common front must be established of all elements in the organised Labour movement who oppose the



policy of coalition pursued by the present leaders of the Labour Party, Trades Union Congress and Co-operative movement, and who stand for independent struggle.

In every Labour organisation, in every trade union branch, district committee, executive committee and conference, in every co-operative organisation the struggle needs to go forward for an independent working-class policy, against the policy of coalition with capitalism, against the attempt to replace the programme of Socialism by the programme of "National Socialism" or "War Socialism" (state capitalist regimentation of the workers with the co-operation of the trade union and labour officials), for a live militant working-class movement, for democracy in the working-class movement, for the aim of power for the working people through the establishment of a People's Government.

If the leaders, the elected officials and public representatives of the workers' organisations refuse to cease their co-operation and coalition with the capitalists, they must be removed and replaced by those who are able to lead the workers from the present chaos and slavery to a free and happy life, to the victory of the aims of the working class, to the victory of Socialism.

The unity of the working class in the struggle against capitalism must and will be established in spite of the efforts of those who seek to tie the working-class organisations to the service of capitalism and its war machine. The militant unity of the working class is the indispensable condition in order to unite and lead the masses of the working people in the struggle for real democracy, peace and Socialism.

## THE COMMUNIST PARTY CALLS TO THE PEOPLE

The Communist Party, the party of the working class, fights for the common interests of all sections of the working people against those who exploit them; for the ending of the war; for freedom, peace and Socialism.

The Communist Party calls on all who agree with its aims to support its struggle, to join its ranks or to fight in association



with it. Only a powerful Communist Party can lead the working people of this country to liberation from the yoke of capital, to the victory of Socialism.

The Communist Party fights for the glorious aims of world brotherhood of the workers, for Socialism, which can alone finally end war by ending the causes of war in the present rotten capitalist order.

All the nightmare of the present bloodshed and suffering is only the sign of the break-up of the old order based on class domination and exploitation which is passing away. The guns and the bombs are shattering not only buildings and homes, but the foundations of the old social order and the illusions of the people. The struggle of the working people is advancing in all countries, and will advance to victory. We are approaching the greatest battles in the history of mankind, not for the cause of our masters, but for our own cause, to become masters of our own lives in a free and equal classless society. Let us hasten the moment of this victory, which will bring happiness and a new life for the people of this country and of all countries.

**NOW** *join the*

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